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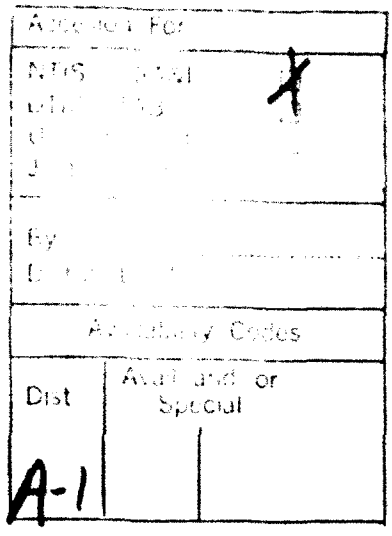
A Cultural Resources Survey of the Walnut Bend Revetment Lee County, Arkansas--A Negative Finding Report

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Memphis District

Jimmy McNeil
Staff Archeologist

August 1983



Abstract

On 23 August, an intensive cultural resources survey was conducted by the Environmental Branch of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District Staff Archeologist, Mr. Jimmy McNeil, and Civil Engineer, Mr. David McNutt. A failure in the Walnut Bend revetment was surveyed.

The Walnut Bend area is located in Township 1N, Range 5E, Section 3 NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of the Latour, Arkansas-Mississippi Quadrangle Map. The area covers approximately 1.84 acres adjacent to the Mississippi River.

The proposed work includes repair and maintenance of the existing revetment. Maintenance may include grading, replacing the concrete skirt, and riprapping the top bank.

A literature search and a pedestrian survey did not locate any prehistoric, historic, or architectural sites within the project right-of-way.

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Maps

Introduction

An intensive survey for cultural resources was conducted by Memphis District Archeologist, Mr. Jimmy McNeil, and Civil Engineer, Mr. David McNutt, on 23 August 1983, within the Walnut Bend revetment right-of-way as directed by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District. The study was performed as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190), Protection and Enhancement of Cultural Historic and Cultural Properties (36CFR 800), and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 898-665).

Project Description

The Walnut Bend revetment is located in Lee County, Arkansas, Township 1N, Range 5E, Section 3 NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 at river mile 679R, ranges 155-157, on the Latour, Arkansas-Mississippi Quadrangle. The project will affect only the proposed revetment maintenance and repair area (Maps 1 and 2). Equipment will be brought in by boat.

Environmental Setting

The project lies within the Mississippi River meander belt where alluvial deposits are more than 200 feet thick over unconsolidated material. Elevations range from 148 feet to 175 feet with a slope ranging from 1 to 3 percent. The higher elevations are mainly natural levees along present or old streams (Gray 1974:2). The elevations and slopes do not apply to the man-made levees. Drainage is by bayous, sloughs, and man-made ditches.

The climate is generally warm during the summer and mild during the winter. Occasionally, there will be extremes in heat and cold temperatures. A great deal of the woodlands area in the county has been cleared. However, small areas of trees may be found near the edge of bayous and along the Mississippi River. Primarily, the trees are willow, oak, cottonwood, hackberry, and sycamore. Underbrush consists of cane, honeysuckle, blackberry and wild grape.

Fauna in the area are not plentiful. Mammals include: rabbit, squirrel, raccoon, deer, possibly mink, muskrat, and beaver. Numerous cottonmouths, rattlesnakes, and other reptiles are reported in the area.

Previous Research

Enough work has been conducted in the general area of the project, by such researchers as Phillips, Ford and Griffin (1951), to isolate and date major cultural periods. However, little survey research has been conducted in the immediate vicinity of the project. The most recent intensive survey work in this area was conducted by American Resources Group, LTD (1980).

Results of the Records Search

The Arkansas Archeological Survey and the National Register of Historic Places were consulted and no prehistoric, historic, or architectural cultural remains were recorded within the project area.

Survey Methodolcgy and Results

The Walnut Bend revetment project area is approximately 1.84 acres in size. The area is presently in partial cultivation. The survey limits extended 60.96 meters behind top bank and 243.84 meters along the river edge. The surface approximately 30-60 meters behind top bank was excellent for visual survey--the area had been plowed, sufficiently rained on, was dry, and had little vegetation on it. The area of failure provided a clean view of the subsurface stratigraphy. The area profile was: surface sandy clay deposit to approximately 30 cm deep; 30 cm-170 cm was brown sandy clay alternating with light brown sand (each varve about 10 cm to 15 cm thick); 170 cm to unknown was blocky grayish brown clay.

Because of the excellent visual conditions no shovel test units were dug. Walking over the plowed surface and along the eroding revetment revealed no artifacts, features, nor soil discoloration that would indicate archeological sites.

The survey methodology used does not eliminate the possibility of encountering deeply buried sites. Therefore, it is recommended that any site encountered during construction be protected from further damage, by stopping construction until its significance can be determined by the Environmental Resources Branch, Memphis District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in conjunction with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

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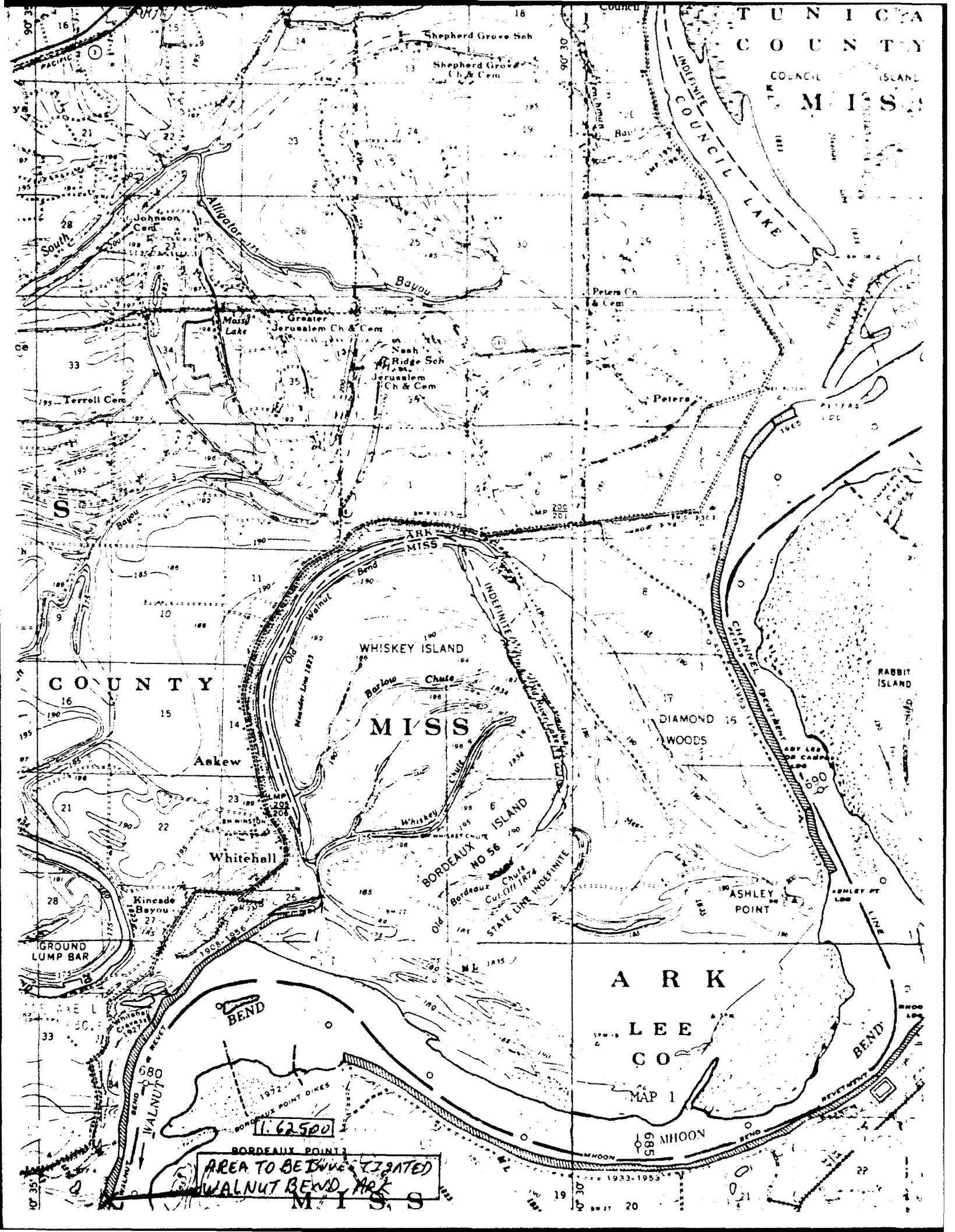
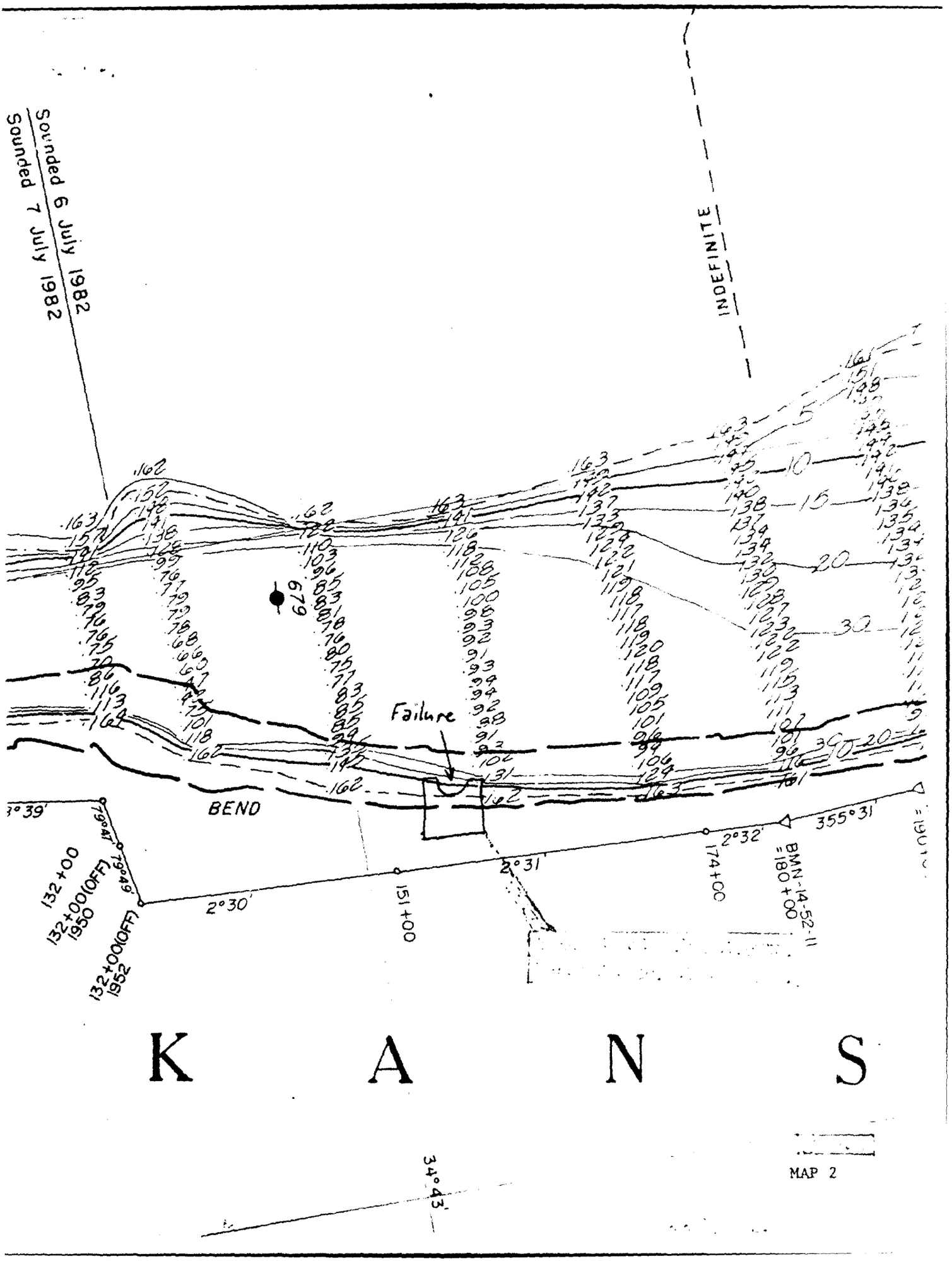

TUNICA COUNTY
MISS
COUNCIL ISLAND
INDEFINITE COUNCIL LAKE
Shepherd Grove Sch
Shepherd Grove Ch & Cem
Johnson Cem
South
Alligator
Bayou
Peters Ch & Cem
Mossy Lake
Greater Jerusalem Ch & Cem
Nash Ridge Sch
Jerusalem Ch & Cem
Terrell Cem
Peters
ARK MISS
Old Walnut Bend
WHISKEY ISLAND
Barlow Chute
COUNTY
MISS
Askew
DIAMOND WOODS
RABBIT ISLAND
CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT
Whiskey Chute
BORDEAUX NO 56 ISLAND
Bordeaux Chute Cut-Off 1874
INDEFINITE STATE LINE
Whitehall
Kincade Bayou
ASHLEY POINT
GROUND LUMP BAR
1908-1956
ARK
LEE CO
BEND
WALNUT BEND
1972
BORDEAUX POINT DIKES
1:62500
BORDEAUX POINT
MAP 1
MHOON
1933-1953
AREA TO BE INVESTIGATED
WALNUT BEND, ARK
MISS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Sounded 9 July 1982
INDEFINITE
Failure
BEND
679
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1950
132+00(OFF)
1952
132+00(OFF)
2°30'
151+00
2°31'
174+00
2°32'
BMN-14-52-11
=180+00
355°31'
34°43'
K A N S
MAP 2